IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 7-9 as follows.

1. (Previously Presented) A mesoporous silica structure having a plurality of mesopores, comprising:

a dendritic framework having mesopores,

wherein 90% or more of the mesopores observable in a 500 nm × 500 nm area pass through the framework in a direction perpendicular to a longitudinal direction of the framework.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Original) The structure according to claim 1, wherein the dendritic framework forms macropores by mutual linking of branched portions of the framework, or

macropore-sized voids are formed between the frameworks adjacent to one another.

4. (Original) The structure according to claim 1, wherein the mesopores are hexagonally symmetrically arranged.

5. (Original) The structure according to claim 1, wherein the mesopores have a pore size distribution in which 80% or more of the mesopores fall within a range having a width of 10 nm and a maximal value.

6. (Original) The structure according to claim 1, wherein a biological material is supported in the mesopores.

7. (Currently Amended) A porous material formed into a plurality of particles, with each particle having a mesoporous silica structure with a plurality of mesopores and comprising:

a dendritic framework having mesopores,

wherein 90% or more of the mesopores observable in a 500 nm × 500 nm area pass through the framework in a direction perpendicular to a longitudinal direction of the framework.

8. (Currently Amended) A sensor for detecting a specimen, which sensor is comprised of ~~the~~ porous material comprising:

a dendritic framework having mesopores,

wherein 90% or more of the mesopores observable in a 500 nm × 500 nm area pass through the framework in a direction perpendicular to a longitudinal direction of the framework; and

~~according to claim 7 and~~ an electrode, and detects an electric output signal based on a reaction between the specimen and a biological material supported in the mesopores.

9. (Currently Amended) A method for detecting a specimen, comprising the steps of:

preparing a sensor in which a biological material is supported in ~~the~~ mesopores of ~~the~~ a structure ~~according to claim 1;~~ having a dendritic framework with mesopores supporting the biological material,

wherein 90% or more of the mesopores observable in a 500 nm × 500 nm area pass through the framework in a direction perpendicular to a longitudinal direction of the framework.

applying a fluid that contains a specimen to the sensor; and

detecting an output signal based on a reaction between the biological material and the specimen.

10. (Cancelled)